



Men Against Violence Against Women

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DIRECTORS: Christopher Holder, **CHAIRMAN**. Donald Berment, **SECRETARY**. Desmond Persad, **TREASURER**.

Date: Sunday/25/July/2004

Our Ref.: mavaw/Comments-1

Your Ref:

*Mrs. Antonia Popperwell,
Committee Chairperson,
Ministry of Social Development,
No 69 Independence Square,
PORT OF SPAIN.*

COMENTS ON THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE FAMILY IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FROM *MEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*.

Under ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Include the Committee member's names and Organisations they belong to.

Under LIST OF APPENDICES:

Include the List of Names and Organisations but have the member's sign this List.

Include the Poem "Let Us Build A Peaceful Society" by David Law as a Nation Building Contribution, (said Poem included at the last page of these Comments).

Under Section 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Subsection 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Paragraph 2—after "the 2000 goals."— include the following:

"In addition, since we subscribe to the adage that one bad apple eventually spoils the whole barrel, which in the Family Context can be interpreted to mean that one dysfunctional Family can tarnish the image of the entire Community and one dysfunctional Community can tarnish the image of the entire Nation; achieving peaceful democratic development for our Society is intrinsically hinged on the effective functioning of the Family Unit."

Under Section 2.0 FINDINGS BASED ON REVIEW OF LITERATURE page 18

paragraph 2 identifies the key themes to emerge from the study.

However, the themes Challenges and Support Systems were not identified after the theme Parenting Practices ended on page 24.

Using Section 1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT Format on page 8 the heading FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA on page 29 should be numbered 3.0 and the following Subsections numbered accordingly 3.1 to 3.5.

Under the now renumbered Section 3.1 TYPOLOGY OF THE FAMILY IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, paragraph one list the key Family Related indicators for which Data was sought.

However, the Category of “***children before the Courts***” was not listed although one Focus Group targeted them and it is mentioned on page 72 as youths being institutionalized for being “Beyond Control”. In addition a large number of children appear before the Courts charged with other offences. Since it was not included does this mean:

1. That this is not a key Family related indicator.
2. That no Data is available from the Courts or Institutions.
3. That we forgot to include it.

Under the now renumbered Section 3.2 FAMILY STRUCTURE on page 32 paragraph two line two “***grandmother extended and other extended***”

Explain, “***other extended***”. Does it mean “grandfather, aunt, uncle, cousin extended”?

This becomes very important when on page 39 under the now renumbered Section 3.4 FAMILY DISPUTES Subsection “The Tobago Situation” paragraph one lines 4,5 6 and 7 compare the situation between Trinidad and Tobago stating that the trend is reversed with Trinidad having more “***other extended***” families than Tobago.

Typographical error on page 37, paragraph one line one, capital M and D for **magisterial districts**.

Under Section 4.0 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA: FOCUS GROUP SERIES, paragraph one, lines 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Was this structure identified in the above paragraph intended to be used to develop this Section? If so it was not so used.

Under Section 4.2 CHALLENGES TO FAMILY LIFE, page 43, paragraph two, lines 7 and 8 needs clarification:

“In the under 25 age group, 18.7% of males in the labour force and 26.4% of females were unemployed in 2002 down from 33.1 and 42.5% respectively in 1990.”

Typographical error page 62, paragraph two, line 3, capital M and C in **magisterial courts**

Typographical error page 71, last paragraph, line 5, caregivers instead of **carers**.

Using Section 1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT Format on page 8 the heading CONCLUSION on page 82 should be numbered 6.0 instead of **5.1**. and the heading RECOMMENDATIONS should be numbered 7.0 instead of **5.2**.

On page 86, paragraph one and two, the 4 Reports, 2 Acts and 2 Initiatives could be made available to the Committee Members for perusal.

Typographical error. page 86, paragraph three, line 2, immediate instead of **short**, the word used in the terms of reference on page 3. Thereafter, wherever the word **short** was used in the GENERAL and SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS, replace with immediate.

Under GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS at page 87:

Add to **Recommendation #1** after **“governmental actions”**. Towards this end, Government will immediately constitute a Family Board of Trinidad and Tobago (FBTT), comprising State, Private and NGO Personnel, with one of its primary functions being to manage the research studies identified in this Report.

Add to **Recommendation #2**. Introduce the Poem “Let Us Build A Peaceful Society” by David Law as a Nation Building Contribution.

Add to **Recommendation #3**, Venues for studying by this group to include local Community Centres, Government Schools and Pan Theatres nearest their homes. Make the time frame immediate.

Under SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS at pages 92, 93, 96, 97, 99 and 100.

Add immediate to the Time Frames for **Recommendations #3, #4, #5, #7, #8 & #9.**

Add to **Recommendation #13 & #14.** These programmes to be managed by the Family Board of Trinidad and Tobago. Add immediate to the time frames.

Add to **Recommendation #15;** include fathers in the victim list. Add immediate to the time frame.

Add to **Recommendation # 16,** this encouragement to be identified in the upcoming Budget by Fiscal measures, which are tax exempt. Add immediate to the time frame.

Add immediate to the time frame of **Recommendations #17, #28, #3,1 #32, #43, #44, #45, #46 and #47.**

Add to **Recommendation #34,** replacing the last line with “This Family Development and Investment Fund is to be managed by the Family Board of Trinidad and Tobago (FBTT).

The Poem “Let Us Build A Peaceful Society” Follows on the last page, (No 5).

THE ACTION PLAN FOLLOWS ON THE NEXT PAGE, (No 4)

THE ACTION PLAN.

1. Immediately constitute a Family Board of Trinidad and Tobago with responsibilities for the following: -
 - A. Managing all funds allocated to it by the National Budget.
 - B. The Family Budget and Investment Fund.
 - C. Commissioning and Supervising the Research Projects identified in this Status of the Institution of the Family Report.
 - D. All immediate, medium and long term actions identified in this Status of the Institution of the Family Report.
 - E. Any and all such action deemed necessary to keep Families operating at maximum efficiency and in the best interest of the peaceful development of the Nation.
2. During the months of October and November, implement a Public Awareness Campaign on the Findings of this Report throughout the Nation.
3. Provide adequate funding in the upcoming National Budget to implement all immediate recommendations identified in this Report. In the interim, set aside all monies to be returned as unspent sums by the relevant Ministries for immediate use by the Family Board of Trinidad and Tobago
4. Implement **General Recommendation #2**. Declare December 2004 a month for Strengthening of Family Life in order to create a National Consciousness on issues affecting Families.
5. Declare the year 2005 as Trinidad and Tobago Year of The Family and encourage the participation of Schools, Institutions and the National Community through Calypso Competitions, Essays, Poetry, Photography, Art and Craft etc.

Signed *DONALD BERMENT* Secretary MAVAW.

Yours In Nation Building
Company No M 1799(95) Charitable Status No F (BUD):7/4/205
G.M. Co-ordinators: David Law, Johnny Bharath,
P.O.R.O.

LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY
By David Law (2002).

WHEN MEN AND WOMEN DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF THE EQUATION
SUBTRACTION WILL ALWAYS BE A DISTRACTION
SUPERIORITY MORE OFTEN THAN NOT BREEDS INSECURITY
PLEASE LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN FAMILY VALUES ARE NOW AN ENDANGERED SPECIES
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS JUST A SERIES IN AN EVOLVING MORASS
FORGET THE RACE, JUMP OUT OF YOUR CLASS
LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN SOME OF OUR CHILDREN ARE HOLDING THIS NATION TO RANSOM
CRIME DRUGS VIOLENCE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY MAY NOT GO AWAY EASILY
BLAME IT ON PARENTAL FAILURES, POLITICAL MISERIES
STILL LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN OUR WOMENFOLK ARE TOKENLY HONOURED AND APPRECIATED
GENDER INBALANCES ARE IMPREGNATED IN OUR CULTURAL PSYCHE
DISMANTLE ALL BARRIERS, ADOPT AN ALL INCLUSIVE PHILOSOPHY
SO WE CAN BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN POVERTY KNOWS NO REGION OR RACE
IT'S TIME FOR US TO SHARE A HUMANE SPACE
BUILD ON SOCIAL CAPITAL, PROMOTE ECONOMIC STABILITY
LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN OUR HOMES HAVE BEEN RIPPED APART BY MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DECAY
AND THE ONUS IS ON OUR WOMENFOLK TO KEEP THINGS AT BAY
PRAY FOR OUR MOTHERS, OUR SISTERS TO COPE
THEIR ONLY AMMUNITION, FAITH AND HOPE
WE MUST BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN MEN ABSCOND, TRUE FATHER FIGURES STILL TO BE FOUND
SINGLE PARENTING BECOMES AN ADVERSARY
THE SILENT RAGE OF A GENERATION, IS MORE THAN A TRAGEDY
MEN LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN POLITICIANS PONTIFICATE AND LEGISLATE ON SOCIAL VALUES
PROVIDING ONLY SHORT TERM ECONOMIC CLUES
THE ROAD TO SOCIAL STABILITY IS LONGER THAN FINANCIAL PRUDENCY
LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN HOUSEWIVES ARE NOT ACCEPTED AS HOME MANAGERS
A PERFECT HOME WILL ALWAYS BE A MYTH
GREATER INCOME BUT NO POWER SHARING
IS NOT THE STRUCTURE FOR SOCIAL FAMILY PLANNING
AVOID THE TENSIONS, DO A FEASIBILITY
LET US BUILD A PEACEFUL SOCIETY.

WHEN WE AS A PEOPLE BECOME VOID OF RACE, CLASS, COLOUR
AND UNITE WITH ONE VIGOUR
TO ERADICATE THE SCOURGES THAT LIMIT OUR POWER
BUILDING A PEACEFUL SOCIETY
WILL NO LONGER BE A DREAM, BUT A PRACTICAL REALITY
PEACE, LET US SHARE THE PROCESS.

Composed by David Law, one of the Management Coordinators of MEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (MAVAW) for the celebration of International Women's Day 2002 and read by him for the first time at 2.45pm, Friday 8th March 2002 on the Brian Lara Promenade, Independence Square, Port of Spain. (This was the seventh (7th) contribution to this Day by Men Against Violence Against Women.)